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BIRDS COLLECTED DURING THE WHITNEY SOUTH SEA EXPEDITION. XXXVIII¹

ON A COLLECTION FROM ERROMANGA, NEW HEBRIDES

BY ERNST MAYR

Mr. L. Macmillan, who made such an auspicious start on Tanna Island,² continued his collecting activities in the southern New Hebrides with a thorough exploration of Erromanga Island. Our knowledge of the bird life of this island was restricted to mostly small collections made by Layard, Ramsay, Farquhar, Macgillivray, and Brenchley. The thoroughness of Macmillan's exploration is best illustrated by the fact that he obtained every species which had previously been recorded except two, *Charmosynopsis palmarum* and *Tyto alba*, both of which he only saw without being able to obtain specimens. He also added the following species to the list of Erromanga birds: *Puffinus tenuirostris*, *Puffinus lherminieri*, *Phaeton rubricauda*, *Demigretta sacra*, *Porphyrio albus*, *Urodynamis taitensis*, *Collocalia spodiopygia*, *Hirundo tahitica subfusca*, *Clytorhynchus pachycephaloides griseus*, and *Zosterops lateralis*.

Although Erromanga is much nearer to Tanna than to Efate, it shares with Efate the following 4 species, which do not occur on Tanna: *Coracina caledonica*, *Clytorhynchus pachycephaloides*, *Pachycephala pectoralis*, and *Lichmera incana*. All four species occur again in New Caledonia, to the southwest of Tanna, and it will be interesting to investigate the zoogeographical significance of this irregular distribution.

A more detailed report on the birds of the New Hebrides is planned for the future and I shall content myself at the present time with discussing some of the more interesting species collected by Mr. Macmillan. His second shipment from Erromanga was unfortunately shipwrecked and a considerable portion of the material was badly damaged by water. The majority of the specimens is, however, in good condition. Mr. Macmillan deserves great credit for his excellent work.

¹ Previous papers in this series comprise American Museum Novitates, Nos. 115, 124, 149, 322, 337, 350, 356, 364, 365, 370, 419, 469, 486, 488, 489, 502, 504, 516, 520, 522, 531, 590, 609, 628, 651, 665, 666, 709, 714, 820, 828, 912, 915, 933, 939, 947, and 977.

² See: "On a collection from Tanna, New Hebrides," Amer. Mus. Novit., No. 912, pp. 1-4 (1937).

Halcyon chloris erromangae, new subspecies

TYPE.—No. 447435, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♀ ad.; Dillons Bay, Erromanga, New Hebrides; June 24, 1936; L. Macmillan.

About intermediate between *juliae*¹ (Efate) and *tannensis* (Tanna). The adult male differs from that of *juliae* by having the sides of the throat, breast, abdomen, flanks, under wing-coverts, and axillaries buffy or pale ochraceous, not white or pale buff; the ring-band and the collar are much deeper rust-colored; the upper parts are slightly more greenish. Differs from that of *tannensis* by the much paler coloration of under parts, under wing, ring-band, and collar.

The adult female differs from that of *juliae* by having the under wing-coverts buff, not white, and by having the lores, the superciliary stripe, and the ring-band deep rust-colored instead of white or buffy; most feathers of the forehead have narrow buffy edges; the general coloration of the upper parts is slightly lighter and greener with less black on the upper back. Differs from the female of *tannensis* by having the ear-coverts black tinged with green, instead of bluish green, and by the paler under wing-coverts.

Wing: 1 ♂ ad., 100; 3 ♂ imm., 92, 96, 96; 6 ♀ ad. (partly moulting), 97-100; 2 ♀ imm., 99, 99. Tail (to tip of longest tail-feather): ♂ ad., 71; ♂ imm., 63, 66, 68; ♀ ad., 67-72; ♀ imm., 66, 67. Bill (from nostril): ♂ ad., 36; ♂ imm., 35.5, 35.5, 36; ♀ ad., 35-38 (36.6); ♀ imm., 35, 35.5.

RANGE.—Erromanga Island, southern New Hebrides.

It is not at all surprising to find a form on Erromanga, an island between Tanna and Efate, which is intermediate in its characters between the widely differing *juliae* and *tannensis*. It is interesting, however, that the male resembles more that of the Efate form and the female that of the Tanna form. There is apparently no noticeable difference in size between the three forms.

Pachycephala pectoralis efatensis, new subspecies

TYPE.—No. 212746, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; Efate Island, New Hebrides; June 14, 1926; R. H. Beck.

ADULT MALE.—Similar to that of *P. p. chlorura* (Erromanga) but back brighter, more citrine, less greenish; yellow nuchal band broader and more conspicuous; yellow of under parts deeper; black breast band broader; less gray on the outer webs of the outer primaries; tail, seen from below, greenish, not blackish.

ADULT FEMALE.—Quite different from the female of *chlorura* by having the crown grayish olive not brownish; wing with very little brown. For detailed description and measurements see: Amer. Mus. Novit., No. 531 (1932), pp. 3-6, under the name "*chlorura*."

RANGE.—Efate and Nguna Islands, New Hebrides.

Lack of material prevented me in 1932 from working out the characters of the Efate bird, although I stated (*loc. cit.*): "Judging from other cases, it is rather probable that the Erromanga and Efate birds are not

¹ For a description of *juliae* and the forms of the northern New Hebrides see Amer. Mus. Novit., No. 469 (1931), pp. 1-10.

the same." The splendid series gathered by Mr. L. Macmillan shows by what characters the already well-described, though unnamed, Efate form differs from *chlorura*. A more detailed description of *Pachycephala pectoralis chlorura* shall be given after the receipt of more material of *cucullata*.

***Petroica multicolor cognata*, new subspecies**

TYPE.—No. 447436, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; Erromanga Is., southern New Hebrides; March 5, 1937; L. Macmillan.

Similar to *P. m. soror*, but crissum and under tail-coverts clearer white; less scarlet on upper throat; scarlet of under parts more crimson, less mixed with orange; upper parts very much more grayish; with the red wash rather inconspicuous; outermost tail-feather completely white or at least with a great deal of white even on the inner web, while in *soror* the white on the outermost tail-feather is more or less restricted to a part of the outer web. *P. m. feminina* is very much more brownish and has also much less white on the tail.

Wing: 8 ♂ ad., 63–65 (63.8); 5 ♀ ad., 61–64 (62.5). Tail: 8 ♂, 42–46 (43.9); 5 ♀, 41–45 (43.2).

RANGE.—Erromanga Island, New Hebrides.

Only one immature male (Brit. Mus.) from Erromanga was available when I wrote my revision of this species (1934, Amer. Mus. Novit., No. 714) and I referred the Erromanga population temporarily to *similis*. The splendid series collected by Macmillan shows that it belongs to a different group of the species, namely, to the forms with the male in a retarded plumage. The next relatives of *cognata* are *feminina* in the Efate group and *soror* from Vanua Lava, Banks group.

***Zosterops flavifrons efatensis* Mayr**

Erromanga birds average slightly larger and tend to have the upper parts darker and less yellowish, which is particularly conspicuous on crown and ear-coverts; the yellow of the forehead is usually more clearly defined and the under parts are slightly more orange-yellow. They tend in their coloration toward typical *flavifrons* from Tanna.

I feel that all these differences are too slight and too much obscured by individual variation to be used for establishing a new form.

Wing: 2 ♂ ad., 62, 66; 4 ♂ imm., 60, 60, 61, 61; 4 ♀ ad., 60–63. Tail: 2 ♂ ad., 45, 46; 3 ♂ imm., 43, 43, 45; 5 ♀ ad., 41.5–44.

